
A New Species of *Puya* (Bromeliaceae) from Central Peru

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ABSTRACT. *Puya lutheri* is described as a new species of Bromeliaceae: Pitcairnioideae. The diagnostic characteristics distinguishing it from *P. fosteriana*, the closest related species, are given.

While studying specimens of Bromeliaceae from ISC, I was unable to determine one of *Puya* with the available literature (e.g., Smith & Downs, 1974). The collector wrote "*Puya* aff. *clava-herculis*," while Harry Luther from SEL stated "*Puya* sp. nov., aff. *pygmaea* L. B. Sm. et *P. cryptantha* Cuatr." I agree with Luther that the present specimen represents a new species, but disagree in its alliance.

After a critical check of many possibilities in the *Flora Neotropica* keys, and after comparison with the descriptions, respectively, I am convinced that the new species is allied to *P. fosteriana* L. B. Smith because of the overall similarity of both species (see also Foster, 1984). Using subkey IV of Smith & Downs's monograph (1974) and applying the given characteristics rigorously, the present specimen keys out as *P. trianae* Baker from Colombia. But if one assumes that the "outer bracts conspicuously serrate," is instead "entire or very obscurely serrate" in a closely related species, one reaches *P. fosteriana* L. B. Smith (1950). The serration of bracts is not a characteristic to infer natural alliances, but only a tool in an artificial key to separate taxa.

Puya lutheri W. Till, sp. nov. TYPE: Peru. Ancash: Yungay Province, Huascarán National Park, Quebrada Huaripampa between Quebrada Paria and Morococha, 77°33'W, 8°56'S, alt. 3,930–4,500 m, 13 Jan. 1985, Smith, Sanchez & Vidaurre 9196 (holotype, ISC 376409; isotype, MO not seen). Figure 1.

A *P. fosteriana* L. B. Smith vaginis foliorum angustioribus, laminis foliorum angustioribus subtus adpresso lepidotis spinis brevioribus, scapo longiori, inflorescentia simplici minore angustioribusque albido-lanuginosa, sepalis minoribus et petalis angustioribus pallide coeruleis differt.

About 1 m tall (according to Smith); leaves to 50 cm long; sheaths broadly triangular ovate, ca. 5 cm long and 5 cm wide, pale stramineous and glabrous on both faces, the margins entire except for the short spinulose transition with the blades; blades

narrowly triangular, 25–30 mm wide at the base, evenly tapering to a point, glabrous above, densely pale appressed-lepidote beneath, the margins laxly but coarsely antrorse-spinose, spines dark brown, strictly to slightly curved, 4–6 mm long; scape unknown but estimated from the complete height to be ca. 60 cm long, 15 mm diam. below the inflorescence; scape bracts unknown; inflorescence ca. 20 cm long, ca. 5 cm diam., dense, simple, whitish lanuginose; floral bracts covering the flowers except for the petals, their sheaths ovate, ca. 6 cm long and 3 cm wide, membranaceous, brownish when dry, densely white lanuginose, the margins entire, their blades long-acuminate, laxly short-spinose, and reflexed, glabrescent; sepals linear-lanceolate, broadly acute, ca. 27 mm long and 5 mm wide, rigidly membranaceous, adaxially glabrous, abaxially densely whitish lanuginose, free, the posterior ones slightly carinate; petals spatulate, ca. 45 mm long, unappendaged, their blades about 9 mm wide, pale blue (according to Smith). Anthers versatile, 5 mm long and 1 mm diam., dark brown when dry. Ovary conical, 10 mm long and 3 mm diam., style slender, 20 mm long, stigma lobes twisted.

Terrestrial in grassland with rare scattered shrubs or stands of *Polylepis* sp., "Queshque" bank of rivulet between two moraines.

Puya lutheri differs from *P. fosteriana* in its narrower leaf sheaths and blades (the blades in *P. lutheri* being appressed-lepidote beneath), the shorter leaf spines, the longer scape, the simple, smaller and narrower, whitish lanuginose inflorescence, the smaller sepals, and the narrower, pale blue petals. *Puya lutheri* and *P. fosteriana* both occur at high elevations (Foster, 1984). The populations of the species are separated by a distance of about 1,400 km. This fact should not be over-emphasized, as a similar disjunction is found in *Puya raimondii* Harms.

The species is dedicated to Harry E. Luther from the Bromeliad Identification Center at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota, Florida, who first recognized it as a novelty.

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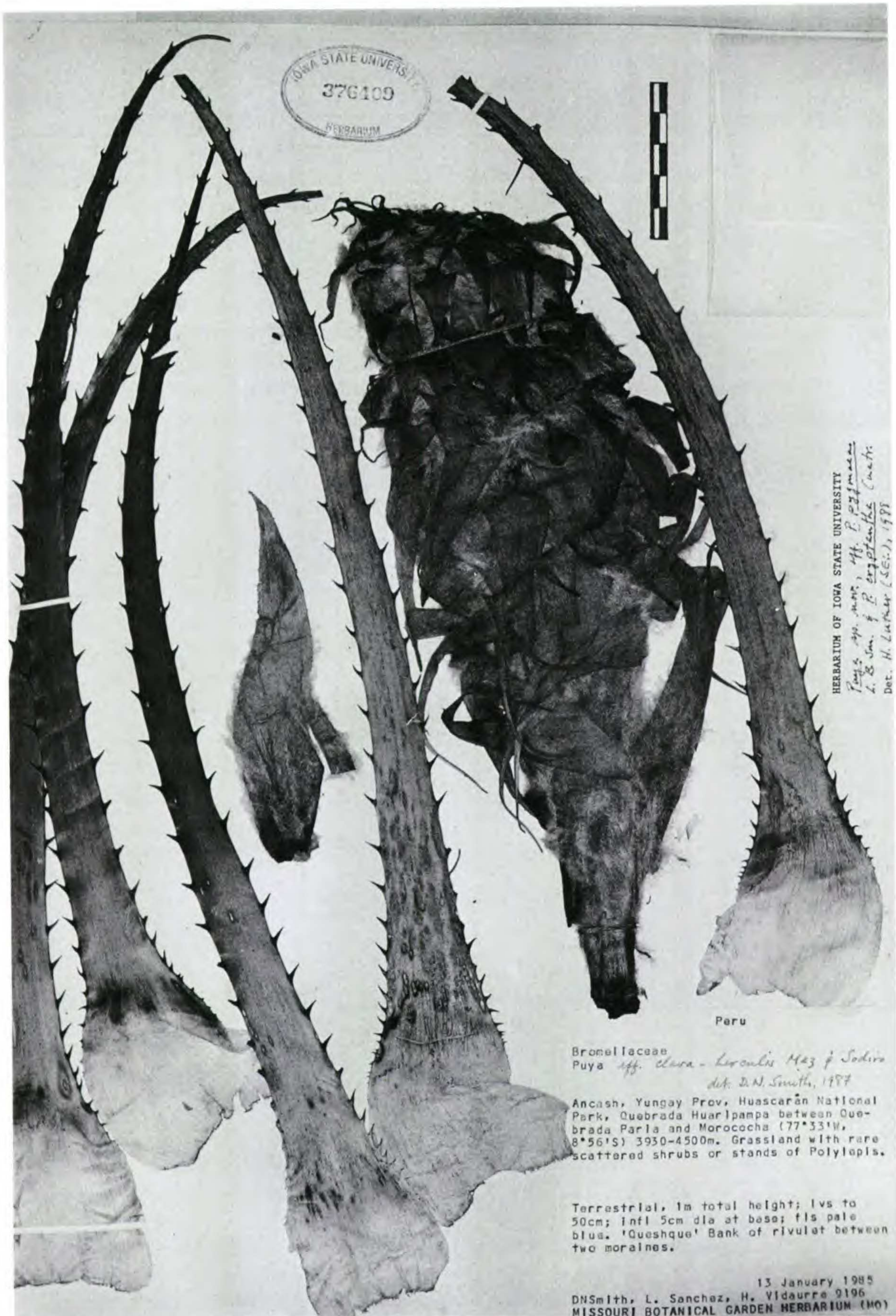


Figure 1. *Puya lutheri* W. Till, holotype (ISC 376409). Scale bar = 5 cm.

Literature Cited

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